

Application No.: 09/700,372

Docket No.: 21625-00032-US

REMARKS

Reconsideration of claims 1, 3-10, 13, 15, 17-19, 21 and 22 is respectfully requested. Claims 1, 7, 8 and 22 are currently amended.

The rejection of claims 8 and 9 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 98/24747 (the "747 reference") is respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims. As indicated in paragraph 5 of the final Office Action, the '747 reference describes the use of an "earthed (zero potential) rigid shaped former (mold). The '747 reference also describes single component polymer mixture.

Applicant is claiming a method of making a thin-walled article using a mould that is not earthed or grounded. Instead, the mould is set at some predetermined voltage. Also, as indicated in Fig.1, Applicants' invention includes two or more reservoirs for separate containment of incompatible polymer components 1a and 1b. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be removed.

Likewise, the rejection of claims 1 and 4 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 98/24747 (the "747 reference") in view of Miller (US 2,551,035) is respectfully traversed. As indicated in paragraph 5 of the final Office Action, the '747 reference describes the use of an "earthed (zero potential) rigid shaped former (mold). Applicant is claiming a method of making a thin-walled article using a mould that is not earthed or grounded. Because Miller fails to overcome this deficiency in the teaching of the '747 reference, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be removed.

The rejection of claims 6 and 18 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 98/24747 (the "747 reference") in view of Miller (US 2,551,035) and in further view of Itoh (US 3,976,031) is respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims.

The Examiner's rejection of claim 6, as stated in paragraph 7 of the final Office Action, recognizes that neither the '747 patent nor Miller teach a "mold having at least two treatment blocks set at different voltage levels. To make up for this deficiency, the rejection cites Itoh, and states that Itoh teaches "a molding surface (2) set at different voltage levels forming three distinct regions (A, B, and C)." This is an incorrect understanding of the teachings of Itoh. For one thing, the molding surface in Itoh, like that of the '747 reference, is a grounded substrate

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(10) with $V=0$. Rather, it is the discharge electrode (2) in Itoh that can be set at different voltage levels. Therefore, the molding surface cannot be set at different voltage levels as the case with Applicant's invention.

The teaching of Itoh is more accurately described later in paragraph 7, that is, "by controlling the voltage regions a much improved control of the thickness results". See, Fig. 4b. However, the controlled voltage regions are not associated with the mold or substrate as claimed, but with the discharge electrode (2). Itoh provides a variable electric field in the deposition chamber to control deposition rates along the length of the substrate. At no time does Itoh teach or suggest varying the voltage applied to the mold. In fact, Itoh teaches away from Applicants' invention because in all of the described embodiments the substrate (mold) is grounded, i.e., constant with $V=0$.

Because none of the three cited references teach or suggest that the substrate or mould can be set at voltage levels the rejection is improper. The mold in Applicant's invention performs the function of the discharge electrode in Itoh as well as provides a molding surface. This claim language makes clear that the different voltage levels are applied to a molding substrate and a not a secondary discharge electrode. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Likewise, the rejections of claims 7 and 17 (paragraph 8), 5 (paragraph 9), 10 (paragraph 10), 15 (paragraph 11), 19 (paragraph 12), 21 (paragraph 13), 22 (paragraph 14) under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 98/24747 (the "747 reference") and one or more of the stated references is respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims. For the same reasons, none of the cited references teach or suggest that the mould is "not grounded", as claimed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 1 and 3 in paragraph 15 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller in view of Goodridge is respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims. Goodrich describes an apparatus that coats a substrate (form) with a thermoplastic resin material. The substrate is both heated and/or a voltage can be applied to the substrate. The voltage can be grounded or electrically charged, that is, $V \neq 0$. Once cured the formed article is removed from the form. However, neither Goodridge nor Miller teach or

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suggest that "the material (1) is a multi-component polymer-based material comprising ingredients (1a, 1b) that are individually heated by a heating unit and mixed together" prior to entering the spray processing unit. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned **"Version with markings to show changes made."**

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, associated with this communication, including any extension fees, to CBLH Deposit Account No. 22-0185.

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Respectfully submitted,

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